McLean County Museum of History's

2021 History Makers Gala

June 16, 2021

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HISTORY Makers

MCLEAN COUNTY MUSEUM of HISTORY

Order of Evening

Welcome - Bob Watkins

Museum Update - Julie Emig

Business Meeting – Bob Watkins

Program

Hindsight is 2020 – Illinois Voices Theatre

Honoring Carole Ringer – Carolyn Yockey

Honoring Jerry Ringer – Paul Harmon

Honoring Barbara Stuart – Ruth Cobb

Honoring Marilyn Sutherland – Jana Edge

Honoring Robert Sutherland – Mike Matejka

Concluding Remarks – Tom Eder

2021 History Makers Gala

Past History Makers

2012

Nancy Froelich, Business woman and education leader

Paul Penn, Labor leader and community volunteer

Caribel Washington, Humanitarian and civil rights activist

2013

Stevie and Roger Joslin, Community leaders and philanthropists

Judy Markowitz, Businesswoman and Bloomington Mayor

Woody Shadid, Salesman extraordinaire, volunteer, and fundraiser

Ruth Waddell, Civil rights activist and union organizer

2014

John and Joanne Maitland, Public servants and volunteers

Margot Mendoza, Human rights activist and community leader

Carol Reitan, Community leader, teacher, and educator

Pat Wannemacher, Businesswoman and community leader

2015

Merlin Kennedy, Civil rights activist and community leader

Peg and John Kirk, Educators, actors and community volunteers

Sonja Reece, Community leader and advocate for women in business

2016

Jill Hutchison, Coach, women's advocate, and community volunteer

Jack Porter, Attorney, community organizer, and minister

Gordon Ropp, Jersey cattle operator and agricultural leader

Fr. Ric Schneider, Franciscan priest and advocate

2017

Craig Hart, Businessman, preservationist, volunteer

Charles and Jeanne Morris, Educators, civil rights activists, volunteers

Jesse Smart, Politician, community leader, public servant

Judy Stone, Volunteer and activist

2018

Sandra and Paul Harmon, Educators and community leaders

Ronn Morehead, Laborer and community volunteer

Don Munson, Broadcaster, author, and public historian

2019

Judy and Richard Buchanan, Activist, politician, community servants

Henry Gay, Activist, philanthropist, community leader

Jana Edge, Nurse, educator, philanthropist

HISTORY *Makers*

MCLEAN COUNTY MUSEUM of HISTORY

A special thanks to our Gala Chair, Volunteers and Museum Staff whose hard work made this virtual event a reality!

Carolyn Yockey – 2021 Gala Chair

Museum Board Slate

Tom Eder – President
To Be Filled– 1st Vice President
Michelle Pazar – 2nd Vice President
John J. Killian – Treasurer
Robert Porter – Secretary
Bob Watkins – Immediate Past President

Class of 2024

Keith Cornille
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Josh Rohrscheib
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Congratulations Dr. Jerry and Carole Ringer from your Gailey Family

Jerry and Carole Ringer

Fundraiser (Carole), Doctor (Jerry), philanthropists and community servants

Jerry and Carole Ringer's shared passion for the arts is well known in the community. Carole says, "[Art] helps to define the quality of life. Even if you are well able to put food on the table, culture is needed for the soul, mind, and spirit."

Carole was a volunteer and ultimately a professional fundraiser for the Illinois Symphony Orchestra and BroMenn Foundation for the Mennonite College of Nursing. She was the first Executive Director of Illinois Prairie Community Foundation and served on over 12 boards, including the Multicultural Leadership Program, Rotary Club of Bloomington, McLean County Museum of History, and Friends of the Arts at Illinois State University, just to name a few. Her tireless efforts have won her an Alpha Omicron Pi Alumnae Women of Leadership Award; an Illinois State Board of Education Award of Excellence; the first McLean County YWCA Women of Distinction Award in the Arts; and she was chosen as a founding member of Northwestern University Council of 100—a group of women executives.

Jerry has served on the board of the MARC Foundation, United Way of McLean County, and Illinois Shakespeare Festival, as an elder and Chairman of the Building Committee at First Presbyterian Church of Normal, and as a member and past president of the Kiwanis Club of Bloomington. He has served in some capacity on at least four more boards throughout the community, as well as the Cornell College Board for 40 years.

HISTORY Makers
MCLEAN COUNTY MUSEUM of HISTORY

Barbara Findley Stuart

Teacher, advocate for fairness, community leader

Barbara served for several years as president of the Normal Public Library board and became the first president of the Friends of the Normal Public Library. She founded seven activist organizations: the Young Adult Problems Study Group; Minority Advocacy Council; Minority Complaints about Police, Peaceful Schools Committee; Rebound Committee; Alternatives to Jail Committee; and McLean County Community COMPACT. She also served on the McLean County Board for 17 years as the vice chair of the Justice Committee. She has a firm belief in fairness, as she urged the adoption of Drug Court, electronic monitoring, Mental Health Court, and Victim Offender Reconciliation programs. Barbara was the driving force of the McLean County People to People Festival, bringing 3,000 students and teachers together for a conflict resolution conference in 1999.

When hearing loss made it difficult for Barbara to be a part of committee meetings and other events, she began to write poetry and opinion pieces for the Pantagraph and the Normalite newspapers. She is currently active with McLean County League of Women Voters, the Multicultural Leadership Program, the Peaceful Schools Initiative, and the Youth LEADS program.

Her talents and tenacity earned her two awards in 1997, the YWCA Women of Distinction's Harriett F. Rust Community Service Award and the Town of Normal's MLK Human Relations Award. Additionally, she received the first Grabill-Homan Peace Prize awarded in 2011. However, the recognition has not changed Barbara's humble nature. Barbara said, "I've always admired the teachings of Jesus. The compassion...the feeling that every person has value and that we are connected to each other and to God... I just hate to see people treated cruelly and unfairly and I always think something should be done about it."

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JOIN THE CONVERSATION

Marilyn and Robert Sutherland

Nurse (Marilyn), professor (Bob), activists, voice for those who are voiceless

During their over five decades in Bloomington-Normal, Bob and Marilyn Sutherland have endeavored to help make this a better community for everyone—particularly for those who often struggle to make their own voices heard. Bob has been “arrested, investigated, and vilified, but he can't imagine having lived any other way," opined James Keeran in a February 2000 Pantagraph article. Regarding Bob and Marilyn’s activism,
Bob said, “We were a team.”

Bob and Marilyn were instrumental in bringing about the Community for Social Action--which supported the United Farm Workers grape and lettuce boycotts, opposed the Vietnam War, and advocated against the U.S. government involvement on behalf of the Sandinistas in the El Salvadoran Civil War. They also played major roles from the very beginning in the Central Illinois chapter of the American Civil Liberties Union, the McLean County Jail Review Committee, and the McLean County AIDS Task Force. Their love of the Constitution and their moral code have been the foundation of their many years serving as the voice for the voiceless—regardless of the dangers, persecution, or consequences. Bob and Marilyn generously created an endowment for The Sutherland Fellowship in 2014. Administered through ISU's Department of English, creative writing students receive financial support and Fellows learn about various aspects of publishing.

The Illinois Municipal Human Relations Association formally recognized Bob’s many contributions in 1998 with the Community Service Award. Bob also received the Florence Fifer Bohrer Award in 2017 from the League of Women Voters of McLean County. However, behind every award is his equally involved, supportive, and persistent Marilyn.

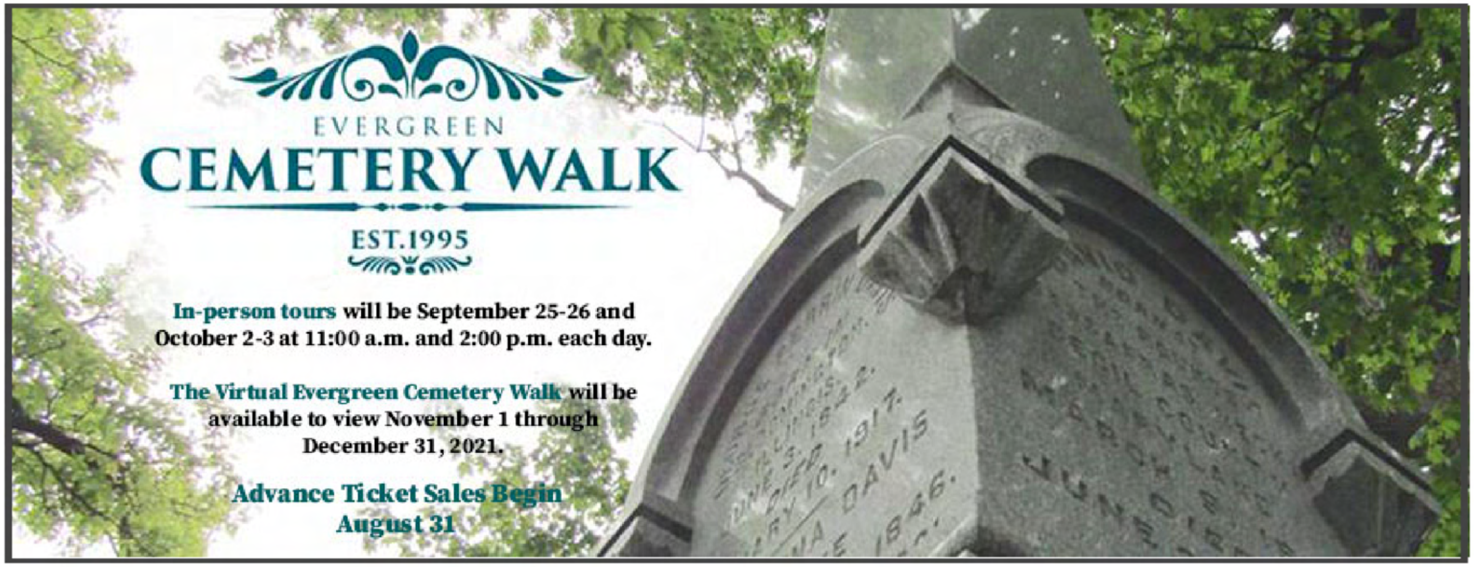
McLean County Museum of History

BECOME A MEMBER TODAY!

Museum membership supports local history, preservation, and education for the entire community.

Membership also offers direct benefits to you and your family with free admission to the Museum and Library / Archives, discounts in the gift shop, member pricing for event tickets, special discounts at local businesses, and our *Time Travelers* reciprocal membership that offers free and discounted admission to 385 sites across the U.S."

200 N. Main St., Bloomington, 309/827-0428, mchistory.org



HISTORY Makers
MCLEAN COUNTY MUSEUM of HISTORY

Hindsight is 2020

Illinois Voices Theatre

Susan Thetard
Susan took over as Artistic Director of Illinois Voices Theatre - Echoes four years ago. Prior to this, she was the University High School theatre director for 18 years as well as teaching English and Theatre. Susan has a BFA in performance from Illinois Wesleyan University and an MFA in Theatre Costume Design from Illinois State University. She has designed costumes over the years for theatres in numerous cities and locally for the Illinois Shakespeare Festival and for Community Players.

Rhys Lovell
Rhys is a writer/actor/director whose work has been seen in Bloomington/Normal and throughout Central Illinois for the past 30 years. He has directed the MCMH History Makers Gala since its inception. He has appeared numerous times as an actor in the Evergreen Cemetery Walk. Additionally, Rhys has directed extensively for Prairie Fire Theatre as well as Heartland Theatre Company, where he also serves as Artisic Director.

Cristen Monson

Cristen earned a BA in Acting from The University of Texas at El Paso and her MA in Theatre Studies from ISU. Her performance credits cover New York, The Maryland Arts Festival, and The Baltimore Theatre Project. Locally she appeared in Urinetown (Pennywise), Gypsy (Mama Rose), A Little Night Music (Desiree) Time Stands Still (Sarah), Tribes (Beth), Floyd Collins, (Miss Jane) and The Electric Baby (Helen). Cristen appeared in the 2018 Evergreen Cemetery Walk as Emily Vecchi Noble. Cristen works at Illinois State University, is on the Board of Directors for Heartland Theatre Company, and recently co-founded Nomad Theatre Company.

John Poling

John is happy to be making his second appearance in the Evergreen Cemetery Walk this year. In 2015 he portrayed Pantagraph publisher William O. Davis. John has acted in over 30 productions and starred in the independent film "The Little Vagabond." He has directed Cabaret and August: Osage County. John has also written several short plays that have been produced. In 2012 his play "Destiny's Tug-of-War" was a winner in Heartland Theatre's Ten-Minute Play competition.

Sally Hoffmann Gowdy

Sally is known in Central Illinois as a musician, composer, and conductor having worked extensively over the years on many theatre projects. She has music-directed for Bloomington Community Players, Miller Park productions, Prairie Fire Theatre, Heartland Theatre and the Illinois High School Theatre Festival. She has orchestrated and composed incidental music for the Illinois Shakespeare Festival, Heartland Theatre and Community Players Theatre. She performed as a flutist for many years in The Sounds of Christmas and is best known for her orchestration for soloist, Philip Shaw's rendition of "Amazing Grace/ O Holy Night." She welcomes the opportunity to be involved in theatre again working on this fine project.

Kathleen Kirk

Kathleen has written the script for the McLean County Museum of History's annual History Makers Gala for the past eight years and is a frequent scriptwriter and performer for the annual Evergreen Memorial Cemetery Walk, both with Illinois Voices Theatre—Echoes. She also acts and directs with Heartland Theatre, and acted in Chicago with Steppenwolf, Free Shakespeare, and Court Theatre before returning to her hometown.. Kathleen also acts and directs with Heartland Theatre Company. Kathleen works at the Normal Public Library, where she facilitates poetry programming. She is poetry editor for the online magazine Escape Into Life.

Jennifer Rusk

Jennifer, a Bloomington native, counts it a blessing and pleasure to be in the 2021 History Makers Gala. She has appeared in various theatrical productions in the community as well as performing at the McLean County Museum of History Evergreen Cemetery Walk. Her favorite role to date was Ursula in Little Mermaid at Community Players Theater. She is an alum of ISU where she majored in Acting. Go you RED BIRDS! As always, Jennifer thanks her heavenly angel, her father Roosevelt Rusk, and her earthly angel, her mother Joyce Ann Rusk, who have supported all her theatrical adventures. Joshua 1:9

Chris Terven

Chris is known in the community for acting, directing, and scene design at Community Players Theatre and recently acted at the Illinois Shakespeare Theatre Festival. Chris currently serves on the board of directors at Community Theatre Players.

Museum and Visitors Center Hours:
9am to 5pm Monday-Saturday
Tuesdays till 8pm

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Your Museum, Your History!

McLean County MUSEUM of HISTORY

TOP 3% Nationally accredited by the American Alliance of Museums since 1984	**23,000** Square feet of Museum space, featuring seven galleries
20,000 + Objects preserved to share the diverse stories of McLean County residents	**15,000 +** Books on McLean County history and genealogy

40,000 GUESTS SERVED ANNUALLY

2,000 + Linear feet of historic papers and images in our archives	**240 +** Finding aids for Special Collections
9,000 Students and older adults served annually	**48** U.S. states and countries abroad represented by our visitors

70% of annual budget provided by private support

FREE All day Tuesdays and Saturday mornings during the Farmers' Market	**FREE** Education programs and resources

www.mchistory.org / development@mchistory.org

McLean County Museum of History

200 N. Main Street,
Bloomington, IL 61701
309-827-0428

Established in 1892

CRUISIN' with Lincoln on 66

We look forward to coming together in-person for next year's History Makers Gala on June 15, 2022!

You may nominate future History Makers candidates at www.mchistory.org